

OUTCRY!

GENERAL STRIKE! ¡HACIA LA HUELGA GENERAL!

In Occupied Palestine, in Haiti, Panama, the Dominican Republic and South Africa, masses of people have picked up the General Strike as a weapon to resist their oppression. In 1987 in New York, uniformed and civilian racists have unleashed a reign of terror on Blacks, Latinos and new immigrants. The people's response — marches, demonstrations, meetings, demands, Days of Outrage, from New York City to Newburgh, New York—has pushed the Black Liberation Movement to a level of militance unseen in 20 years. The ante has been raised, the demand has increased. The December 12 Coalition, after organizing the Days of Outrage, has called for 1988 to be the year of the General Strike. This issue of **OUTCRY** is a discussion of the General Strike. Your participation is essential to our collective progress. Read on, think hard, analyze long, respond thoughtfully and actively.



Moving Towards the **GENERAL STRIKE 1988**

It's time for action. The general strike is the answer. At this time the problems in the Black, Latino, and poor communities are at their worst. The headlines in the newspapers read like the headlines from twenty years ago. Police kill our children, our men and even our grandmothers—and their actions go unpunished. The drug problems are making walking zombies out of our people. These zombies prey on our community, and they don't contribute anything but death and destruction. Millions are spent on our childrens' education in the school system, but instead of producing the world's future leaders and scholars, they produce functional illiterates who cannot fill out a job application or recognize their own name, if you showed it to them. In a city which has thousands of vacant apartments, why are people homeless? Most family households are on a strict budget, and most are only a pay check from being homeless themselves. And with this shaky and unpredictable economy, no jobs are guaranteed.

It's time for action. In recent months a new Black leadership has fought and won battles the old-fashioned way—by hitting the streets. The Black Men's Movement Against Crack has singlehandedly eliminated crack in some problem areas in Brooklyn. The Days of Outrage have shown this city that we will no longer stand for the injustices that we as poor people have to endure every day. And it has shown our people that we can stand up against the beast and win. And we can win. But it is a step-by-step process.

First the battle is won in the mind. We must think, eat, and sleep General Strike. We must mention it to our friends, write it on our letters, talk about it on the telephone. We must realize that not only black people catch hell in the city, but poor people of all races catch hell. Anyone who has to get up and slave for companies that put profit before people, that understand the profit race but not the human race, should join the General Strike.

We in New York City live in the capital of the capitalists; every major corporation has a base here. The General Strike will affect these corporations. It will send

a shock wave around the world, carrying the news that we people in New York, like the people in South Africa, are fighting. Like the people in South Africa, we will win.

This country is planning to eliminate Black people, and poor people in general. As we head for an even more serious economic decline, we see that everything we use is manufactured in some sweatshop in a third world country. Our country does not use working people anymore: we've outlived our usefulness. *But when the system attacks you, you fight back. The General Strike is the answer!*

But we need to know what you want. If you're reading this, consider yourself an organizer. Get people involved in the strike. And you and those you involve—tell us your ideas. Obviously, the schools, the police, the housing and drug situations all have to change in big ways. Write your ideas on the how and what of these changes on the General Strike Questionnaire we've enclosed. We at the Defense Committee Against Fascism (DCAF) are asking for your input. And we want you to know that we love you: no way are we going to hurt or deceive you. We're out here 24 hours a day, seven days a week working for the people. We won't disappear because one problem has been "solved"—we'll move on to the next and the next, to anything that affects the people.

***"When the system attacks
you—you fight back
....The General Strike
is the answer!"***

And as a people, let's be sure we all stand united behind a single line: Working towards the General Strike. Get involved. Get others involved. Help give this system a surprise that will make the Days of Outrage look like a tea party: We're all going to be involved:
THE GENERAL STRIKE IN NEW YORK IN 1988

On Towards the General Strike!

Freedom or Death!

GENERAL STRIKE

QUESTIONNAIRE

**We want to hear from you. If the GENERAL STRIKE is
succeed, we need to think, talk & work together.**

I think important targets for the GENERAL STRIKE would be:

The actions I want to see taken during the GENERAL STRIKE include:

The GENERAL STRIKE should make the following demands:

I would like to stay in touch.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

FORWARD TO THE GENERAL STRIKE IN 1988!

FOLD, STAPLE AND MAIL

DCAF
PO BOX 760
NYC 10030

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

DEFENSE COMMITTEE AGAINST FASCISM
PO Box 760
New York, NY 10030

FOLD, STAPLE AND MAIL

Not the Union Generals, but the... **GENERAL STRIKE FREED THE SLAVES!**

Slavery would never have been abolished if the slaves had not made use of the general strike.

During the Civil War, African-Americans were considered, by both the North and South, as sub-human minstrels, willingly and naturally slaves, and treated as well as they deserved to be. Rather than choose sides, what the slaves decided to do was wait, look and listen and try to decide where their best interests lay. As it turned out, the slaves held the key to winning the Civil War—their labor.

The South needed them to tend the plantations, to grow food to send to the front lines. Once the slaves figured out that by withholding their labor they could cause confusion and lack of system as a result of the general strike, they started leaving the plantation, to join the Union army.

Lincoln never intended to free the slaves. In fact, at the beginning of the war, slaves seeking shelter in the Union Army were returned to their Southern masters. The Union constantly denied the accusation by Southern newspapers that the Civil War was a war of Emancipation. Neither slaves nor free African-Americans were allowed to enlist in the Federal army. However, as the Northerners progressed through the South, they were

faced with fugitive slaves. When it really became a war, it became apparent the fugitive slaves could be used as much-needed laborers and servants. Some individual generals took the step of freeing them and paying for their work. This started a steady stream of fugitive slaves who were striking to they no longer had to work on the Confederate plantations. This was not a desire to stop work, it was a strike on a wide basis against the conditions of their work.

As the flood of fugitive slaves kept coming, abandoned plantations were seized and the African-Americans were used to work them for the benefit of the government. It was determined they could perform many of the camp duties ordinarily done by soldiers, and that they could help in building roads and earthworks. The women worked in the camp kitchens and as nurses in the hospitals. When the white soldiers became exhausted, there was an army of 200,000 African-American soldiers who relieved them.

In August 1861, Lincoln faced the truth—not only that the slaves should be freed, but that thousands of them were already free. On January 1, 1863, he declared that the slaves of all persons in rebellion were “henceforward and forever free.”

***“ It’s not a
question of
what’s in it
for me, but
of freedom
for me.”***

***—Father Lawrence Lucas
February 1988***

The pulse of New York City is the sum of our actions. We work, we travel, we spend, we party. We can stop the city by changing our actions for one day or for longer. We have the power to halt the city, to stop the flow of money, to turn out the lights. All we have to do is use that power.

Use the leverage of daily life, the power of our numbers!

- ➡ *Whether or not to go to work.*
- ➡ *Whether or not to send your children to school.*
- ➡ *Whether or not to walk and let the trains and buses stand empty.*
- ➡ *Whether or not to join the community in the streets.*

Using the actions of everyday life, people can mass a force to deny the legitimacy of a racist city administration and a criminal in the White House. We refuse consent to a government, bankrupt and bloated, that does not represent us..

A General Strike in New York City

- ➡ *for self-determination and human rights for African and Latino peoples.*
- ➡ *for an answer to racist mobs and police violence against our communities.*
- ➡ *for control of our communities, our homes, and our streets.*
- ➡ *for a revolutionary future for all children.*

THE GENERAL STRIKE

Around the world, brothers and sisters in the struggle for self-determination and national liberation shape tactics and plan strategy guided by **THE GENERAL STRIKE**. In occupied Palestine, the initial shop closings and work boycotts were supported by the disruption of "business as usual" when the general public took to the streets in mass demonstrations. As the Israelis answered curses with crippling beatings and stones with bullets, proudly proclaiming their willingness to meet outrage with atrocity, the Palestinians organized and grew stronger. Two months into the strike, hundreds of Palestinian workers have left their position in the Israeli occupation forces, and the General Strike continues to grow. The Israelis have banned world media, shut down Palestinian news organizations, and are trying to enforce an economic blockade, but the Palestinian response is unwavering: **EXTEND THE GENERAL STRIKE!**

*We rejoice in the resistance and victories of the Palestinians, the Haitians, the Dominicans and the people of Southern Africa. **BUT OUR FIGHT IS AT HOME. WE MUST FIND THE DETERMINATION TO USE THE GENERAL STRIKE AS A MEANS TO WIN POLITICAL FREEDOM AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE HERE IN THE UNITED STATES.***

ACTION AROUND THE WORLD

SOUTH AFRICA

In their years of struggle against the white settler government, the people of South Africa have used localized and general strikes to resist intolerable conditions. In Soweto, students faced the South African Army rather than accept education in Afrikaans. Widespread rent strikes continue within areas described as Black Townships. The unionized Black workers in the diamond mines successfully struck for some improved working conditions and salary increases.

HAITI

JANUARY 17, 1988: General Strike in Haiti to protest the puppet elections and the CMG dictatorship and violence. No markets open, the shops are shuttered, no transportation, people stay in their homes. Haitians show their unified rejection of elections on January 18, 1988.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

FEBRUARY/MARCH 1988: A wave of strikes and protests spreads across the Dominican Republic, a popular response to deteriorating economic conditions and the assassination and kidnapping of political organizers. The Dominican people reject their government's acceptance of the International Monetary Fund economic dictates and demand freedom for the over 200 political prisoners, an increase in the minimum wage and a lowering of food prices.

PALESTINE

PEACE DAY—DECEMBER 21, 1987: General Strike by Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and inside Israel, for Palestinian Nationalism and in defiance of Israeli military terror. 100,000 Palestinians didn't go to work in Israel. Shops, markets and schools were closed. *This strike is in its fourth month.*

JANUARY 9, 1988: Strike in solidarity with 1,100 Palestinians arrested and detained by the Israelis. The leaflet called out, "Don't go out of your house on Saturday to prove to your sons in prison that you are with them."

FEBRUARY 24, 1988: Commerce, transport and school come to a halt as 1.5 million Palestinians protest arrival of U.S. Secretary of State George Schultz.